The Chippendale Room

at the

Museum of Fine Arts

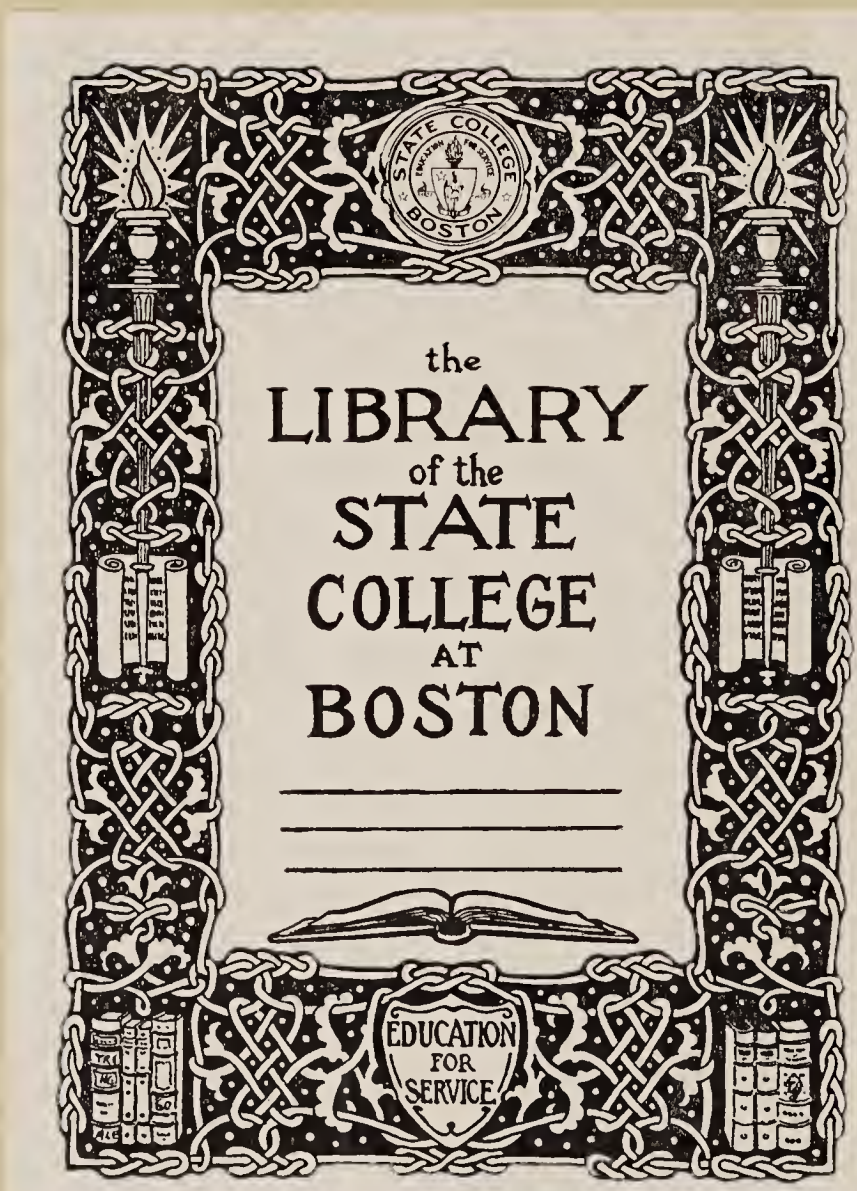
Boston, Massachusetts

By Eben Howard Gay

OVERSIZE

MAP OF SURREY
showing location of
Wimbledon (B 8)
Ideston (A 11–12)

From *Perambulation of the County of Surrey*, John Aubrey (1673 vol. I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The Chippendale Room

from Woodcote Park, Epsom, Surrey, England

[*circa* 1750]

THE MANOR HOUSE OF WOODCOTE PARK

The drawing room herein treated was located on the ground-floor of the right wing of the house, adjoining the one directly behind the Palladian window

The Chippendale Room

from Woodcote Park
Epsom, Surrey, England

[*c.* 1750]

By Eben Howard Gay

Department of Decorative Arts
of Europe and America
Museum of Fine Arts · *Boston, Massachusetts*

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Foreword

The paneled Drawing Room, formerly in Woodcote Park, Epsom, Surrey, England, and The Contemporary Furnishings are the gift of

EBEN HOWARD GAY

who has written the following history and descriptions.

Acknowledgments are made:

To E. R. D. MACLAGAN, C.B.E., B.A., Director of The Victoria and Albert Museum, London, for advice on the painting of the woodwork.

To WALTER GAY, artist and connoisseur, for his attribution of the ceiling painting to Antoine Coypel.

To GEORGE A. WELLER, of Harvard University, for assistance in historical research.

To A. ARMITAGE, Secretary of the Royal Automobile Club of Great Britain, and his former assistant, the late GERALD BISS, for data concerning recent history of Woodcote Park.

EDWIN J. HIPKISS, *Curator*

Museum of Fine Arts
Boston, Massachusetts

Paneled Drawing Room of Carved Fir Wood

from The Manor House *of* Woodcote Park

Epsom, Surrey, England

THIS DRAWING ROOM WITH ITS FIVE DECORATIVE paintings on canvas and its carved marble fireplace was formerly in the old English Manor House of Woodcote Park, Epsom, Surrey (*see Frontispiece*). A tradition that Thomas Chippendale designed the Room seems to be justified by the decorative motives employed, many of which, especially those in the moldings, in the enrichment of the panels and in the marble fireplace, are strikingly similar to those so frequently used by Chippendale in his furniture. However, we have no evidence that the famous cabinet-maker designed rooms — rather that his activities were confined to the designing and building of furniture. In the absence of documentary proof, it is not the less evident that the designer, whoever he may have been, was deeply imbued with the tenets of the Chippendale school. Thus influenced, he achieved a masterpiece in interior decoration, and at the same time produced a room in which Chippendale furniture must inevitably harmonize. Such furniture the room now contains, many of which pieces undoubtedly owe their origin to that maker's workshop in St. Martin's Lane.

In union, the room and its furnishings exemplify the efflorescence of English eighteenth-century decorative art.

Location and Surroundings

Woodcote Park, in the heart of Surrey, twelve miles distant from London (*see end-leaf map*), is adjacent to Epsom Downs, the scene of the Derby races. While the golf course traversing its three hundred acres is of recent origin, sporting activities in other forms are indigenous to the soil. Thus we read:

"But whether you gently ſtep over my favourite Meadows, planted on all Sides, quite to *Woodcot*-seat, in whoſe long Grove, I oftenеſt converſe with myſelf . . . whether you go to ſome Cricket-match, and other Prizes of contending Villagers or chuſe to breathe your Horſe at a Race, and to follow a Pack of Hounds in the Proper Season: Whether, I ſay, you delight in any or every one of theſe, Epsom is the Place you muſt like before all others . . . And *Woodcot-Green*, in which laſt Place, your humble Servant has his Hermitage."[1]

[1] *The Natural History and Antiquities of the County of Surrey*, John Aubrey (1773), Vol. II, pp. 212 and 199.

The Manor House and its Traditions

Woodcote Park is rich in historic and romantic traditions, which, due to continued changes of ownership of the estate have become clouded in the passage of time. The existing stone and stuccoed brick mansion was probably constructed about 1650 by Richard Evelyn on the site of an old monastery, formerly occupied by the Abbots of Chertsey, whose brick cells, long tunnels, and subterranean passages still exist in the basement of the present building. These passages extend to unknown lengths, so that the neighboring grounds are filled with evidences of the abbots' occupation. Recently, a heavy lorry, operating some two hundred yards from the house, sank into what proved to be an outlying brick cell of the ancient monastery.

During the middle of the eighteenth century, Charles, the sixth Lord Baltimore, then resident at Woodcote Park, carried out extensive plans of improvement, both upon the exterior of the building and in its interior decoration. He also made a visit to Italy, where the present ceiling panel and the four over-door pastoral scenes were secured. These five paintings were a nucleus for the design of the room.

Description of the Room

The measurements of the room are:

Length, 23′ 1½″ Width, 20′ 4″
Height, wood paneling, 10′ 11″
To top of ceiling, 12′ 2″

The measurements of the ceiling-painting are:

Length, 8′ 9″ Width, 6′ 3½″

In each side wall are two pairs of paneled doors, with canvas paintings in the shaped panels above. In the east wall is the marble fireplace, and in the west wall are the two windows.

In design, the room shows the influence of the contemporary French style and yet has an individuality that is typically English. It meets the terms of Oliver Brackett's dictum: "English work, indeed, has ever had its own distinctive mark, and whatever the native workman borrowed from abroad he has speedily made his own . . . the intermingling of native craft and foreign design has given to the work spontaneity of treatment and picturesqueness of effect, and has imparted to it freshness, vigour, and vitality."

The motives which pervade the entire design are the C curve and the shell, both singly and in combination. These are clearly seen in the oval border which frames the ceiling-painting, in the centers of the upright carved panels of the walls, in the running scrolls of the over-door panels, and, markedly, in the marble fireplace.

In placing the room in the Museum, the first necessary step was to strip the carved wood panels of the successive coats of paint accumulated during past years. The former painted surface was then attained by a few thin coats of pigment, so lightly applied as to preserve the carving in all its original crispness.

The Decorative Paintings

The large canvas, "Apollo and the Muses," which occupies the oval panel in the center of the ceiling is attributed by Mr. Walter Gay to the French painter, Antoine Coypel (1661–1722).

This painting, when brought back from Italy by the sixth Lord Baltimore, about the middle of the eighteenth century, was in rectangular form, and was then enlarged to produce an oval shape which would lend itself to the artistic conception of the designer of the room. The paintings on canvas occupying the over-door panels portray pastoral scenes, and are attributed by Mr. Gay to some Dutch artist of an earlier period than that of Coypel.

The Carved Marble Fireplace (*see p.* 34)

The chimney-piece has a flowing outline in C curves, with shell enrichments and overflowing-water effects. These motives are carved in white statuary marble combined with a background of yellow Siena marble. In the center is depicted a scene representing Aesop's fable of "The Dog and the Shadow." The chiseling, which is executed with high technical skill, was probably the work of some Italian sculptor then resident in England.

As it is unusual to see these decorative motives in marble, it seems probable that this successful venture emanated from the designer who created ribbon-forms in wood.

Description of the Georgian Furniture, Painting, Porcelains and Rug

ROMNEY PORTRAIT (*see p. 35*)

From the Private Collection of the Writer

Ex Coll. Lockett Agnew

THE portrait of Charles Parkhurst by George Romney (1734–1802) on the east wall is recorded in "Romney — Catalogue Raisonné," by Humphrey Ward and W. Roberts, as follows:

"Son of Robert Parkhurst, Esq., a Captain in the Army; married Sylvia, daughter of George Braithewaite, Esq., Governor of Ceylon; Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. Half figure, facing spectator, looking to left; blue velvet coat, which is buttoned, but slightly shows yellow waistcoat; large white neckerchief; wig; sky background."

This portrait was painted by Romney in his best period soon after his return from Greece and Italy, under the inspiration kindled by his first direct contact with old-world sculpture and painting. Simplicity and dignity mark his treatment of the subject, which is typical of Romney's brush in its grace and color, in the strong modeling of the head, the curving lips, and the life-like expression in the eyes.

Cowper, in his "Sonnet to Romney," bears testimony to an important fact — that Romney does not merely represent a form and semblance, but reveals personal character in his portraits:

"Not the form alone
And semblance, but, however faintly shown,
The mind's impression, too, on every face." [1]

THE FURNITURE ADJOINING THE WALLS (*c.* 1740–60)

Unlike French furniture, which is frequently signed by the maker, English furniture bears no distinguishing mark. The few bills from Thomas Chippendale which exist, as at Harewood House, only emphasize the need of a standard for determining the origin of a fine specimen of furniture in St. Martin's Lane. Such a standard is supplied in the authoritative work on Chippendale by Mr. Oliver Brackett,[2] of the Victoria and Albert Museum. He writes:

"The work known to have come from the workshops of Chippendale is stamped with such high technical merits, shows so much feeling for the value of relief, is so intensely sensitive yet vigorous, as to suggest that a sculptor of skill and experience had charge of the shops in which it was produced. It is no exag-

[1] *British Artists, Romney* (1922). S. C. Kaines Smith, M.A., p. 61.

[2] *Thomas Chippendale.* Oliver Brackett, pp. 98, 93

geration to state that all the work known to have been executed by Chippendale's firm possesses that quality which can best be described as Style. By the possession of style, the work of the master can be distinguished from that of the average man. It would be a mistake to regard this quality as merely a mark of genius, something illusive, intangible, and incapable of analysis, for, if reduced to practical proportions, style can probably be traced to imaginative conception combined with complete mastery of material. This characteristic of excellence of workmanship, in our opinion, gives to the furniture of Chippendale a value which might be described as permanent."

A study of the contemporary pieces of mahogany furniture in the room will demonstrate that one and all measure up to Chippendale's high standard, as defined by Brackett in the foregoing section. Certain of the pieces, notably the two cabinets, the sconces, the side table, and the ribbon-back chairs, may, in spite of the absence of documentary proof, be safely attributed to him; the remainder also show the salient characteristics of his design and execution. The chairs are in the "French Taste," to quote Chippendale's expression; the other pieces in the room show "Chinese Taste"; the two predominant characteristics of his style.

Chinese Chippendale Large Cabinet (*see p.* 36)

Similar designs in Chippendale's "Gentleman and Cabinet Maker's Director" are referred to as "China Cases." Mr. Brackett's surmise, that "a sculptor of skill and experience must have had charge of Chippendale's shops," lends color to a belief that this piece of furniture owes its origin to none other than the premier designer, and for this reason: its crowning feature is a heron, so spirited and life-like in action that it could have been modeled only by a sculptor whose talent surpassed that of any cabinet-maker of the day. Further proof of the correctness of Mr. Brackett's theory that a sculptor was connected with Chippendale's workshops is found in the statement of another authority that "all Chippendale's important productions were first modeled in wax or clay."

This cabinet, together with a set of ribbon-back chairs, was made for a grandfather of the last remaining descendant of the Ryde family, in England, and were delivered to his Elizabethan house, Crumpsall Old Hall, Lancaster, in 1752–53. This date coincides with the marriage of the elder Ryde, and the re-furnishing of the Old Hall to receive his bride. The chairs and cabinet were handed down to successive generations, and were never separated until 1927, when the cabinet was indirectly acquired from a descendant for the "Chippendale Room" in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

As it is generally recognized that ribbon-back chairs owe their existence to Chippendale, the inference seems reasonable that the master designed this cabinet as well as the chairs, and delivered them in fulfillment of Ryde's order.

It is hardly necessary to seek proof of the identity of a masterpiece in English furniture, which combines, as does this cabinet, boldness of conception, symmetry of form, vigor of carving, perfection of design, and the depiction of sentient life in its crowning member; such qualities spell only one possible maker.

Chinese Chippendale Desk-Bookcase (*see p.* 38)

From the Private Collection of the Writer

The Chinese and French influences are skilfully blended in this specimen, at once exquisite in its details and balanced in its proportions. The San Domingo figured mahogany of which it is constructed is rich in red tints, which contrast with the deeper color that time has wrought.

The connoisseur can ascribe an unsigned portrait to Reynolds, Gainsborough, Romney, Raeburn, or Lawrence, as the case may be. Viewed with the same artistic discernment, this desk-bookcase may with equal propriety be attributed to Chippendale.

The desk, during the past half-century, was in possession of Henry W. Brooke, Esq., first in his country house at Brighton, and later in his Holland Park house in London.

Chippendale Ribbon-back Chairs (*see p.* 40)

From the Manor House of Rochdale, Lancashire, England

This set of chairs may be considered as Chippendale's crowning success in this wide field of design. He so regarded them when describing *Plate* XV in his "Gentleman and Cabinet Maker's Director":

"These ribband-back chairs, which, if I may speak without vanity, are the best I have ever seen (or perhaps have been made)."

Oliver Brackett refers to the same model:

"Such brilliant essays as the ribbon-back chair . . . show wonderful skill in the mastery of material."

Arthur Hayden declares:

"His ribband pattern chair-backs are at once a revolution in English design. Their lightness, their grace, their elegance, and their due sense of restraint must strike succeeding ages, as they struck his contemporaries, with continued admiration."

Chippendale's reference to *Plate* XV, above cited, was to a page in his Director, illustrating "Three ribband-back chairs" in slightly varying designs; the last of which, perhaps the most beautiful, is in every detail identical with the set in this room.

Chippendale Sconces (*see p.* 41)

From the Private Collection of the Writer

The art embodied in these sconces extends beyond the domain of the cabinet-maker into that of the sculptor. The main, heart-shaped design consists of two winged cherubs, whose features are at once youthful and expressive. This device is suspended by bow knots from a festoon of ribbons and flowers whose rendering is delicate and true. The carving throughout is incisive, and cameo-like in its delineation of the motives making up the charming composition.

Since the lesser English eighteenth-century cabinet-makers, Ince, Mayhew, Mainwaring, and others, in their known productions, have never reached the excellence of craftsmanship which marks these sconces; and since the carved ribbon device is found in the work of but one English designer, one must conclude that their maker was Chippendale himself, the conceded master to whom his *confrères* looked for inspiration.

Chinese Chippendale Side-Table (*see p.* 42)

The apron consists of a deep open fret carved from a single strip of wood, upon the center of which is imposed an acanthus scroll, with rosettes applied at intervals over the remainder of the surface. The square legs, each formed from a solid mahogany block, are cut on all four sides with a pierced fret. Sufficient wood was left in the center of the pierced leg to permit the cutting of bell forms, which were carved through the interstices, somewhat after the Chinese method of carving a nest of balls from a single block of ivory. Above each leg is a medallion, bearing in bas-relief the head of a Chinese mandarin. So varied are the features and expressions of the subjects depicted as to suggest that they may originally have been drawn from living models.

The table was originally constructed in the middle of the last century for the Cope family of Mayland Court, West Southminster, Essex, from a late descendant of which it was indirectly acquired for this room.

Chinese Chippendale Looking-Glass (*see p.* 43)

From the Private Collection of the Writer

Inspired by the French rococo style, then at the height of popularity, the maker gave free rein to his fancy, and in the development of this design lavishly employed a wealth of scrolls, flowers, shells, and exotic birds.

The looking-glass is divided into two horizontal panels, the upper and narrower one being decorated with a row of Chinese dancing girls, alive with action and vivid in coloring; this color has been preserved in its original brilliance by the method then employed of painting the figures upon the inner side of the glass. With all the elaborate enrichments which a looking-glass, as a gilded decorative ornament, demands, the design is convincing, and its structural lines harmonious and well-balanced.

George Graham Bracket Chiming Clock (*see p.* 41)

(*c.* 1740) *From the Private Collection of the Writer*

George Graham (1673–1751), the maker of this clock, known as "Honest George Graham," was a nephew of Thomas Tompion, the "Father of English Watchmaking," and was associated with him for seventeen years, until Tompion's death in 1713, when Graham inherited the business. Both were horologists of commanding ability. With Tompion's ashes, which had found sepulchre in Westminster Abbey, were later placed, under the same stone, those of Graham. "The grave of Tompion, in Westminster Abbey, was opened to receive his pupil, and the exceptional honor of their interment in that place is the best testimony that can be adduced as to the estimation in which these eminent horologists were held." [1]

The clock face is in the usual form of hour-and-minute dial, with a smaller dial above, recording the days of the month. A chime of bells strikes the hours and quarter-hours.

The age of the clock and that of the room are nearly identical. The sound of the chimes that we hear today is the same that generations heard during the past two centuries. The clock thus forms a living link between the present and the period when both clock and room had their birth.

The Chinese Porcelains (*see p.* 44)

Ex Coll. J. P. Morgan No. 180A Catalogue de Luxe

Ex Coll. James A. Garland No. 1466A Catalogue de Luxe

Pair Chinese Porcelain Blue-and-White Tall Club-shaped Vases, Ch'ing Dynasty, in corners of West Wall of Room.

The Oriental Rug (*see p.* 46)

Ushak, Asia Minor, Carpet — Seventeenth Century.

[1] *Old Clocks and Watches and Their Makers, Fifth Ed.*, 1922, F. J. Britten, p. 299.

Woodcote and its Historic Site

The owners of the Manor of Woodcote, from the Chertsey Monastery originally on this site, to the Royal Automobile Club of Great Britain, are recorded in the following

Pedigree

A.D.	666	The Abbots of Chertsey
	1453	John Merston and his wife
		Their co-Heirs
	1511	Misses Joan and Ursula Merston
		George Mynn, Esq.
	1648	Richard Evelyn, Esq.
	1669	Elizabeth Evelyn
	1691	Charles Calvert, Fourth Lord Baltimore
(*Feb.*)	1715	Benedict, Fifth Lord Baltimore
(*April*)	1715	Charles, Sixth Lord Baltimore
	1751	Frederick, Seventh Lord Baltimore
	1768	Mr. Monk
	1769	Mr. Nelson
	1777	Mr. Arthur Cuthbert
	1788	Mr. Louis Teissier
		afterward Baron de Teissier
	1855	Mr. Robert Brooks
		Mr. Herbert Brooks
	1913	Royal Automobile Club of Great Britain

Roman Occupation of the Woodcote Site

Our earliest information concerning Woodcote under Roman rule rests upon the following deductions of historians:

"During the four hundred years of Roman occupation, four large cities were founded in the Regnian provinces, one of which called *Noviomagus*, generally supposed to have been built in Surrey, has afforded a fertile topic of antiquarian investigation." [1]

That the site of this ancient Roman station Noviomagus was identical with that of Woodcote is considered probable by the following authorities:

" . . . and on the Top of the Hill adjacent, appear great Tokens of an once flourifhing Town, which *Camden* takes to be the ancient *Noviomagus*, mentioned by *Ptolomy* [*sic*], of which remain Ruines built of Flints, Stones &c." [2, 3]

[1] *Surrey Archaeological Collections* (1858), Vol. I, p. 4. *Archaeology of the County of Surrey*, The Rev. Octavius Freire Owen, M.A., F.S.A.

[2] *The Natural History and Antiquities of the County of Surrey*, John Aubrey (1673), Vol. II, p. 151.

[3] "There are to this Day, Roman Coins, Urns and Bricks &c. dug up by the Rusticks." *The Diary of John Evelyn* (Feb. 8, 1675).

"*Camden*, our learned Antiquary, ſeems, in his Opinion, to have lighted pat upon the Place, where this old Station [Noviomagus] ſomtime ſtood, in *Surrey*, at *Woodcote*, two miles Southward of *Wimbledon*, on an Hill, *in quo modicæ Urbis manifeſta viſuntur Veſtigia*, ſaith he." [1]

Horsley, likewise (in his "Britannia Romana," pp. 373, 423 and 424), after referring to the different opinions on the subject, concurs with the above authorities in considering Woodcote as the site of the *Noviomagus* "of the Itinerary [of Antoninus, the Roman historian]. In that part of the second Iter of Antoninus, which lies between London and the *terminus* (says the above author), we have three stations which are mentioned in no other Iter; the first of which is Noviomagus, at ten miles distance from Londinium according to the Itinerary. This must be the same with *Neomagus* in Ptolemy, which he places nearly south from London, a little inclining to the west (*see end-leaf map*), and is the only, or principal place he mentions among the *Regni*. Ptolemy's position and the Itinerary distance would direct to the neighborhood of Croydon or *Woodcote*, where Camden long ago, and Dr. Gale more recently, have placed *Noviomagus;* where both saw some remains of an old town, but I think no proper Roman antiquities. . . . Upon the whole, I confess myself most inclined to continue *Noviomagus* at *Woodcote*, — not far from Croydon."

Many of the ancient British highways were rebuilt in connection with the Roman occupation of England, which took place in 55 B.C., and continued until the early part of the fifth century. Among those reconstructed was a road running to the then principal city of Noviomagus, held by the above authorities to be on the site of Woodcote. History relates:

" . . . Stane Street . . . came only to Dorking, where it ran into and joined this ancient British Way . . . which was then straightened and improved by the Romans thenceforward in its course. It [the Old British Road] then enters Pebble Lane, and onwards to the east side of Woodcote Park to the northeast corner . . . but here he loses all trace of it." [2]

"To determine the access to it is difficult, the nearest ascertainable road is that which . . . leads over Stansted Heath in Caterham, through Chaldon to Woodcote (the supposed Noviomagus)." [3]

"Wallington, in which I include Woodcote, till better informed, was a conſiderable place being the Reſidence of *Romans* or of *Britains* after the Legions were drawn off from hence. . . . The Urns that have been dug up in this neighborhood ſhew that it was poſſeſſed by Romans, or by Romanized Britons. Woodcote has been a place full of Inhabitants, as appears from the traces of Streets and the number of old Wells, ſome of which have been very deep. It will be

[1] *The Natural History and Antiquities of the County of Surrey*, John Aubrey (1673), Vol. II, p. 155.
[2] *Surrey Archaeological Collections* (1858). *Roman Roads in Surrey*, H. F. Napper, Vol. IX, p. 338.
[3] *Surrey Archaeological Collections* (1858). *On a Roman Villa discovered at Titsey*, Grenville Leveson-Gower, Vol. IV, p. 216.

expected that I produce ſome Remains of Earthworks or Walls here. I have ſeen none, but we are ſure that this was and ſtill is the name of the Place." [1]

Another road passing by Woodcote was known as the "Pilgrim's Way." On this highway, in 1300, the pilgrims of Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales" fared forth from the Tabard Inn at London to the shrine of Thomas à Becket in Canterbury; resting by the way, after their first twelve miles, it may fairly be assumed, at the monastery of Chertsey, then occupying the Woodcote site.

The Abbots of Chertsey

In this period, it was the custom of the Saxon nobility to "ſign their own Grants to Monasteries," and it is of record that "the Bull of Pope Alexander IV confirms to the convent of Chertsey their possessions, and therein it is called Ebesham" (from which Epsom is derived).

"The only fact which we learn from history concerning Epsom, prior to the Conquest, is that it formed part of the possessions of the convent of Chertsey, which is said to have been founded as early as A.D. 666, and was one of the mitred abbeys, whose head was a lord of parliament, and one of the twenty-nine abbots who held of the King by barony." [2]

Reference to the convent of Chertsey also appears in "Domesday Book," the Great Survey of England, completed by William the Conqueror in 1086, wherein it is recorded:

"The Abbey (Certesy) holds Evesham (another form of Epsom). In the time of King Edward it was rated for 33 hides,[3] now for 11 hides . . . The wood yields twenty hogs." [4]

Owners of Woodcote Park
Subsequent to the Chertsey Grant

Woodcote Park was originally included in the Manor of Horton, which, together with the Manor of Epsom, belonged to the Abbots of Chertsey; but "in the reign of Henry VI the Abbot in power granted the ville of Horton to John Merston and his wife Rose, which grant was confirmed by the King." [5] In 1511 William Merston died leaving no male issue, naming the two daughters, Joan and Ursula, as co-heirs. The latter married Nicholas Mynn, one of whose descendants sold the Estate to George Mynn. His only son dying childless, the property again passed into female hands, to Elizabeth, his sister, the eldest daughter of the said George Mynn. After her marriage to Richard Evelyn, August 16, 1648, the following reference to Woodcote Park appears in John Evelyn's Diary:—

[1] *Antiquities of Surrey*, Salmon (1737), pp. 45, 46.
[2] *History of Epsom*, Henry Pownal (1825), pp. 4, 5.
[3] The 'hide' is generally supposed to be equal to 120 acres.
[4] *Domesday Book. Sudrie (Surrey)*, Sect. VIII, par. 8.
[5] *History of Surrey*, Brayley (1850), Vol. IV, p. 350.

"I went to Woodcote (in Epsom) to the wedding of my brother Richard, who married the daughter and co-heire of Esquire Mynn, lately deceas'd, by which he had a greate estate both in land and monie, on the death of a brother. The coach in which the bride and the bridegroome were, was overturn'd in coming home; but no harm was done them."

Upon Mrs. Evelyn's death, her daughter having pre-deceased her, she left by her will, dated January 21, 1691, the Manor of Horton and Woodcote Park to Charles Calvert, Fourth Lord Baltimore, an Irish Peer, maternally descended from George Mynn of Hertingfordbury in Hertfordshire. His grandfather, George Calvert, the first Baron Baltimore, had meantime obtained from Charles I a grant of Maryland, in the United States of America, which was made out to his heirs and successors in 1632, a few weeks after his death. Under this succession, his grandson was Governor of Maryland for fourteen years, until deprived of the province in the Revolution of 1689. As the estate of Woodcote Park was bequeathed to the fourth Lord Baltimore two years later, the four brothers, Charles Calvert, Benedict, Charles, and Frederick, took up their residence in the existing house and occupied it for the ensuing sixty years.

The Builder of the present Manor House

Woodcote Park was probably built by Richard Evelyn around 1650, and its rich interiors, including the paneled Drawing Room herein treated, were added a century later by Charles, sixth Lord Baltimore.

Brayley writes: [1]

"The old manor-house at Horton, which was surrounded by a moat, appears to have been the abode of the Mynns and their predecessors; but after the marriage of their co-heiress, Elizabeth, with Richard Evelyn, that gentleman, being struck with the far preferable situation of Woodcote Park, determined to erect a mansion there for the residence of the owners of the estate; and such a house he built, together with a chapel and a library."

This attribution to Evelyn as the builder is equally held by other authorities. Charles, sixth Lord Baltimore, is sometimes mentioned as the "founder of the present mansion," probably because he re-decorated the house about the year 1750, when the room herein treated came into existence.

Owners subsequent to the Lords Baltimore

The building remained in the possession of the Baltimore family until Frederick, seventh Lord Baltimore, was obliged to flee to the Continent because of the scandal revealed at the Kingston Assizes in 1768. Woodcote Park was then sold to Mr. Monk, in 1769 to Mr. Nelson, and in 1777 to Mr. Arthur Cuthbert, at

[1] *History of Surrey*, Brayley (1850), Vol. IV, p. 352, footnote 5.

whose death in 1788 it was again sold — a series of quick changes of ownership. At that date Woodcote Park was separated from Horton and bought by Mr. Louis Teissier, a London merchant. It then passed to his son, Baron de Teissier, so created by Louis XVIII, in 1819, as lineal descendant of Teissier, Baron de Marguerittes and Marquis de Lagarne in Languedoc. The property was then bought by Mr. Robert Brooks, from whose son, Mr. Herbert Brooks, this room was indirectly acquired in 1927 for presentation to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

English Furniture in the Eighteenth Century

THE highest accomplishment in furniture design and execution in England was attained during the eighteenth century. Among English cabinet-makers of that period, the name of Thomas Chippendale stands forth pre-eminently as the master designer who, beyond all others, has given to the world a well-nigh infinite variety of beautiful furniture models that may never be surpassed. He may be said to have created a national style in the art, resting upon the secure foundation of form, symmetry, balance, and harmony.

Arthur Hayden maintains:

"He was the pioneer of the taste of his day, and the lawgiver to the cabinet-makers scattered up and down the country, who rapidly produced good work on his lines; and his restless virility as a carver, as a designer, and as a master craftsman have won him a niche in the temple of fame."

Brackett pays further tribute to his talents:

"The hand of the artist is shown in the crispness of curling leaves or scrolling acanthus foliage found on much of his carved furniture . . . and in all the work is found a sense of liveliness and vitality, the result not probably of instinct, but of sheer technical skill, qualities that are sufficient to distinguish the genuine work of Chippendale from the dull and lifeless copies made in the nineteenth century." [1]

THE ART OF CHIPPENDALE

Thomas Chippendale was made a member of the Society of Arts in 1760 and was active in furniture design and construction in London from 1740 to the year of his death, 1779. He worked in mahogany, relying first for his effects upon structural line and proportion before enriching his surfaces with appropriate carving, without the use of painted decoration, inlay or metal mountings. During his later years there were exceptions to this in his work for Robert Adam. The principal motives which he employed in his decorations were the acanthus leaf in varied forms, scrolls, volutes, flowers, birds, borders of ribbon-and-rose and rope-edge, pagodas, frets, cartouches, the heads and feet of birds and animals, and masks bearing human features. The versatility of his genius found expression through the wide fields from which he drew his inspiration — chiefly France and China, but also Italy, Holland and Spain. He drew upon the art of these countries wherever, with his fine selective sense, he discovered decorative motives which could be adapted to his own designs. From China he adapted the pagoda form to many of his cornices, and made further use of her designs in lattices and frets. (*See* Large Cabinet *and* Desk-Bookcase, *pp.* 36 *and* 38.) Her device of a dragon's talon grasping a pearl is seen as the claw-and-ball foot on his furniture. To

[1] *Thomas Chippendale*, Oliver Brackett, p. 98.

neighboring France under the contemporary art of Louis XV, Chippendale found himself especially drawn. The style then in vogue, characterized by elaborate scroll ornament, shells and flowers, is reflected in Chippendale's work (*see* Looking-Glass, *p.* 43), and its potent influence is in evidence in many of the designs in his "Gentleman and Cabinet Maker's Director."

Hepplewhite, Sheraton, and the Adam Brothers

Amid this efflorescence of English decorative art were being sown the seeds of reaction, which found expression in the last quarter of the century in the less robust designs and refined ornaments of Hepplewhite, Sheraton, and the Adam brothers. Sheraton seldom departed from the straight line in his productions, although Hepplewhite still employed the curved line in his shield-back chairs and sideboards, as well as in many other models. The Adam brothers, architects, were chiefly instrumental in introducing classical forms coincident with their similar use in France. They were primarily designers and left the execution of their work to others. Among these was Chippendale, who collaborated with Robert Adam in producing, during this transition period, exquisite examples of the cabinet-maker's art, some of which remain to this day in the houses for which they were made, notably Harewood House, Nostell Priory, and Badminton, Gloucestershire.

The new school sought to supplant the curves and elaborate carving of the preceding era with Grecian designs, exotic wood-inlay and painted panels. A connoisseur who has not surrendered to the charm of Chippendale's fine sweep and exuberance of carving will find in these later designs a classic flavor and originality worthily fitting them to complete the century of England's accomplishment in artistic furniture.

Illustrations

The Room Walls

THE walls are composed of molded panels in fir wood. The upper panels are carved with shell forms flanked by running scrolls and acanthus leafage, and each serves as a frame to an inner raised panel of similar shape. The dado consists of a chair-rail enriched with a fret, and panels with carved rosette-forms, from which scrolls radiate in star-like pattern.

THE ROOM BEFORE FURNISHING

The North Wall with Furniture in Place

The South Wall with Furniture in Place

The East Wall with Furniture in Place

The West Wall with Furniture in Place

Ceiling and Painting (*See* The Decorative Paintings, *p.* 11)

THE decorative details of the plaster ceiling, reproduced through the employment of "wax squeezes" from the original at Woodcote Park, all lead to the central panel, which is outlined in enriched C scrolls in bold relief to form the frame of the original painting now occupying it. Four corner medallions depict implements and trophies symbolizing music, architecture and painting. The cove-cornice has a running design of birds and animals, perched upon scroll supports.

The painting, "Apollo and the Muses," portrays the Olympian god, ivy-crowned with lyre in hand, standing upon a rock, with the nine Muses grouped about him in recumbent postures. In the foreground flows a shallow stream, where two cupids are sporting with swans; in the middle distance Pegasus is about to take winged flight from a rock. This painting of mellow and luminous color has been attributed to Antoine Coypel.

The Marble Fireplace (*See p.* 12)

THE fireplace is in white and yellow marbles with graceful C curves, shell enrichments and edgings simulating overflowing water.

The panel in the frieze depicts Aesop's Fable of "The Dog and the Shadow." The little animal, alert and eager, stands upon a bridge and, all unwittingly, is about to relinquish the bone in his mouth in order to secure the one which he sees reflected in the stream below.

Romney Portrait (*See p.* 13)

Canvas oval, 28″ × 23½″

THE portrait of Charles Parkhurst, by George Romney (1734–1802), is referred to in "Romney — Catalogue Raisonné" by Humphrey Ward and W. Roberts, as follows:

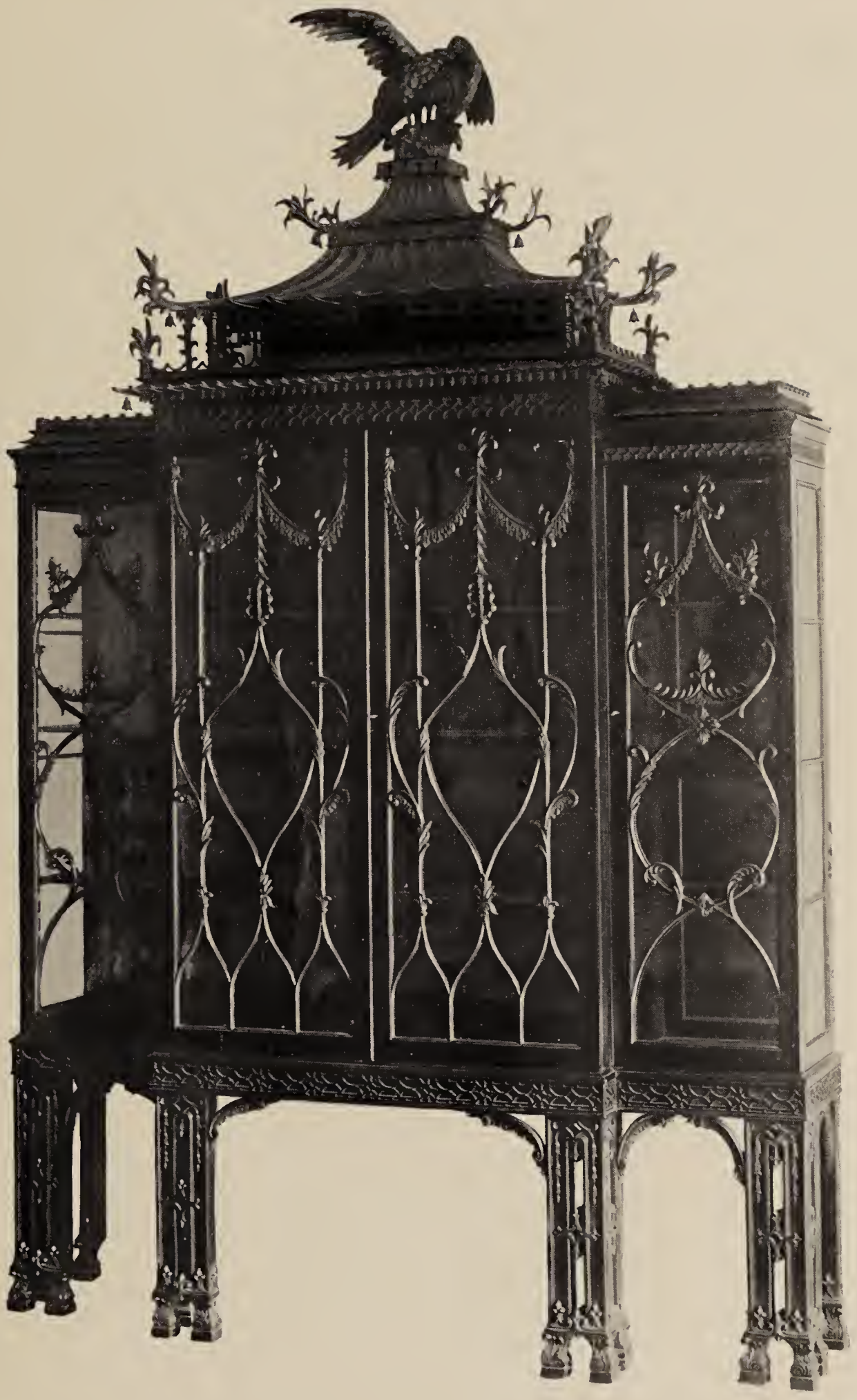
> "Son of Robert Parkhurst, Esq., a Captain in the Army; married Sylvia, daughter of George Braithewaite, Esq., Governor of Ceylon; Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. Half figure, facing spectator, looking to left; blue velvet coat, which is buttoned, but slightly shows yellow waistcoat; large white neckerchief; wig; sky background."

Detail of Cornice

Chinese Chippendale Large Cabinet (*See p.* 14)

Height 9′ 6″ — Width 6′ — Depth 17″

THE body consists of three compartments, the middle one higher and wider than those at the sides; all three have glazed doors with tracery in two designs of curving scrolls, rosettes, and dripping-water effects. A broad fret, carved in the solid wood, ornaments the base, which is supported by legs in four groups across the front. The cabinet is surmounted by a double pagoda-like roof, whose corners terminate in waving calamus leaves, which, in Chinese mythology, are believed to "keep evil spirits away." Beneath the lower roof is an open fret. Small bell-forms depend from the various projections, and the pagoda-roof effect is extended into the pattern which caps the side compartments. A heron with outstretched wings surmounts the cabinet and gives the final touch of style to the whole brilliant design.



Detail of Fall-board

Chinese Chippendale Desk-Bookcase (*See p.* 15)

Height 8′ 11″ — Width 3′ 7″ — Depth 2′

THE bookcase section is enclosed by folding glazed doors with tracery in geometrical designs. The upper parts of the frames are embellished with garlands of flowers suspended from bow knots, which, with the key-pattern and applied fret beneath the cornice, are carved with exceeding delicacy. Around the cornice is a low balustrade in open fret-work, with a central design of scrolls and a small oval urn at each corner. The desk-body is made up of graduated drawers, supported on bracket feet which are richly decorated with acanthus leaves. The fall-board is outlined with a running pattern of C curves, within which floral swags depend from rosettes in graceful festoons.

Chippendale Ribbon-back Chairs (*See p.* 15)

One of four side-chairs. One of pair arm-chairs.

IN the general design of these chairs, French influence is uppermost. The splat is composed of looped ribbons intertwined with the C curves which connect it with the frames. Shell decoration and other C curves enrich the rails. The feet are in the form of inverted volutes ornamented with acanthus. The seat covers are of the original Spanish leather.

Chippendale Sconces (*See p.* 16)

One of four.

Height 25½″ — Width 9″

THESE heart-shaped sconces depend from a plait of looped ribbons, which is garnished with roses. The lower half of the design is in the form of a deeply carved shell flanked by two nude cherubs with folded wings, and bodies terminating in acanthus scrolls.

George Graham Bracket Chiming Clock (*See p.* 17)

Height 35½″ — Width 16″ — Depth 10″

FROM the plinth above the hood rises a small pavilion with pagoda roof supported by slender bamboo columns, under which, in dancing posture, is a youthful figure in cuivre doré. An egg-and-dart pattern runs around the pedestal, which rests upon ormolu scroll feet, finials in the same metal being employed in decorating the case above.

Chinese Chippendale Side-Table (*See p.* 16)

Length 5′ 5″ — Height 3′ — Depth 25″

THE apron consists of a deep open fret carved from a single strip of wood, upon the center of which is imposed an acanthus scroll, with rosettes applied at intervals over the remainder of the surface. The square legs, each of which is formed from a solid mahogany block, are pierced on all four sides in a fret design. . . . Above each leg is a small medallion carved in bas-relief with the head of a Chinese mandarin.

Chinese Chippendale Looking-Glass (*See p.* 16)

Height 4′ 7″ — Width 4′ 6″

IN the design of this looking-glass the maker gave free rein to his fancy, and, in its development, lavishly employed scrolls, flowers, shells, and exotic birds. The looking-glass is divided into two horizontal panels, the upper and narrower one being decorated with figures of Chinese dancing girls, alive with action and vivid in coloring. These colors have been preserved in their brilliance by the method then employed of painting the figures upon the inner side of the glass.

Pair Chinese Porcelain Blue and White Tall Club-shaped Vases (*See p.* 17)

Height 29½″ — Diameter 9½″

No. 180A Catalogue de Luxe J. P. Morgan Collection

REPRESENTING in vivid shades of cobalt blue the progress of a Chinese Emperor through his dominions.

The Emperor is seated in a State Junk, surrounded by mandarins, Court Ladies and a company of Taoist genii crossing the waves of the Cosmic Sea. The company includes Tung Fang So, who rides on a lotus leaf and carries on his shoulder the branch of peaches which he has stolen from the Tree of Life. Liu Han is accompanied by his familiar, the three-legged toad, and Wen Ti, the god of literature, who is posed on the head of a fish dragon and wields a pencil brush.

Height 30¼″ — Diameter 9″

No. 1466 Catalogue de Luxe Vol. II J. P. Morgan Collection

The floral and border treatment is accomplished in three tones of blue, a brilliant sapphire prevailing, on a white ground. The composition is made up of trees in full leaf and flower with song-birds perched and flying high among the branches. There also are depicted garden flowers, the hawthorn and magnolia, while the phoenix rests upon the rocks.

Oriental Rug (*See p.* 17)

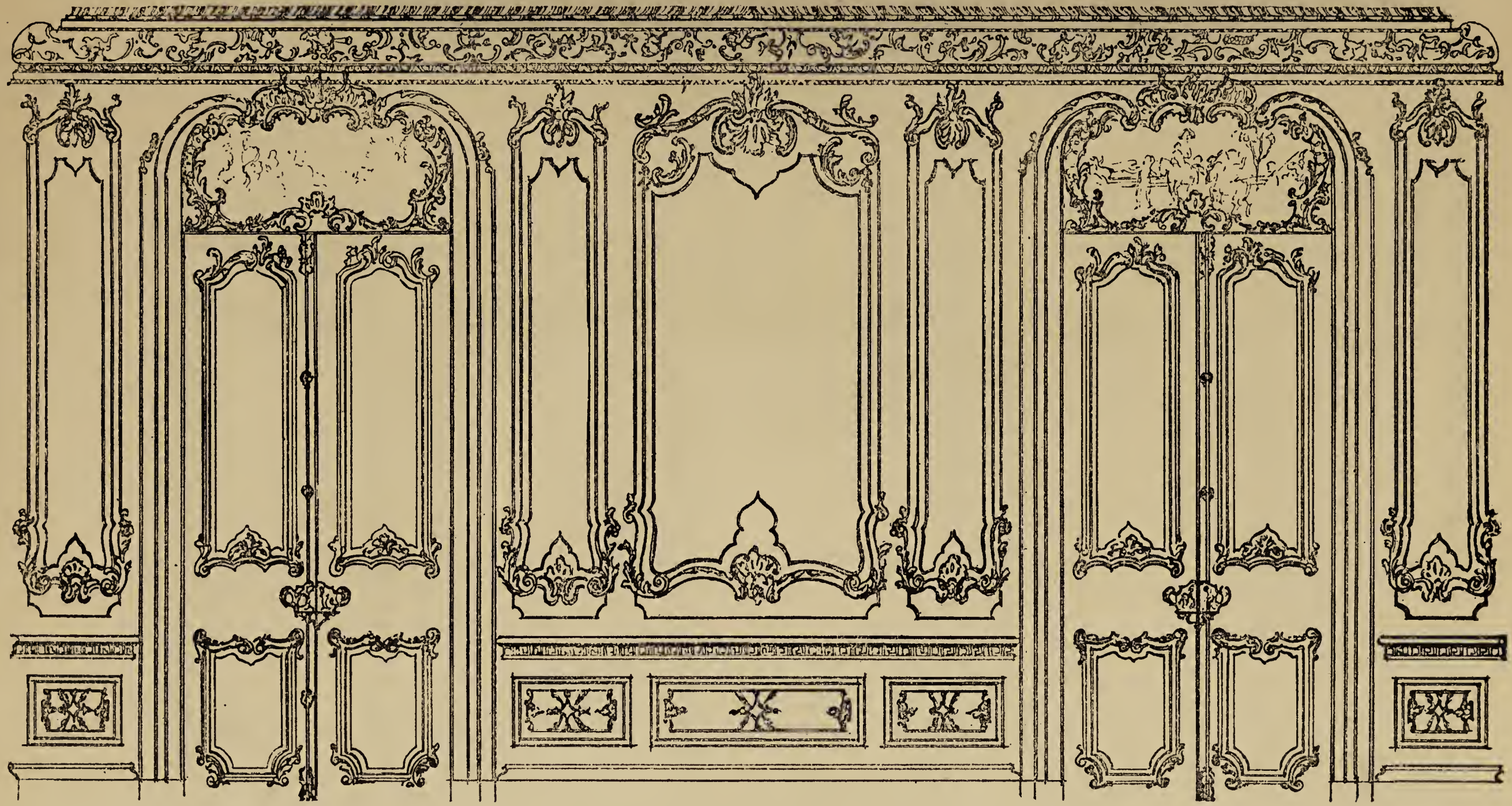
Length 12′ — Width 8′

RALPH WOODWORTH, rug connoisseur, describes this specimen as follows:—

"Ushak, Asia Minor, Carpet of the seventeenth century. The colors of the pattern are dominated by rose-red on ground of deep blue and green throughout the field and borders, except, surrounding the medallion and exclusive of the spandrels, the remaining portion of the field carrying the delicate vine, leaf and flower pattern is woven in deep blue on a brilliant red ground. The central pattern of the large circular medallion is outlined in rose-red, light-blue and golden-yellow on ground of two tones of deep green, surrounded by pattern on deep blue ground; the medallion is enclosed by a narrow serrated edge on ground of dark green; the pattern of the spandrels at the corners of the field is embellished by a great variety of colors including red, brown, black and bright blue on dark-green ground; the design and distribution of colors throughout the field is symmetrically balanced; the main border is made up of light tones of green, blue or yellow arranged in small areas alternately within the rose-red floral pattern on ground of deep blue, the main border enclosed by narrow meander borders; the inner of pink on deep green, the outer light-blue on red ground; pile-knotted wool; warp and weft, red wool; knots, Ghiordes, ten to an inch, 100 to the square inch."

Measured Drawings of Room

[Pages 49, 50, 51]



North and South Walls

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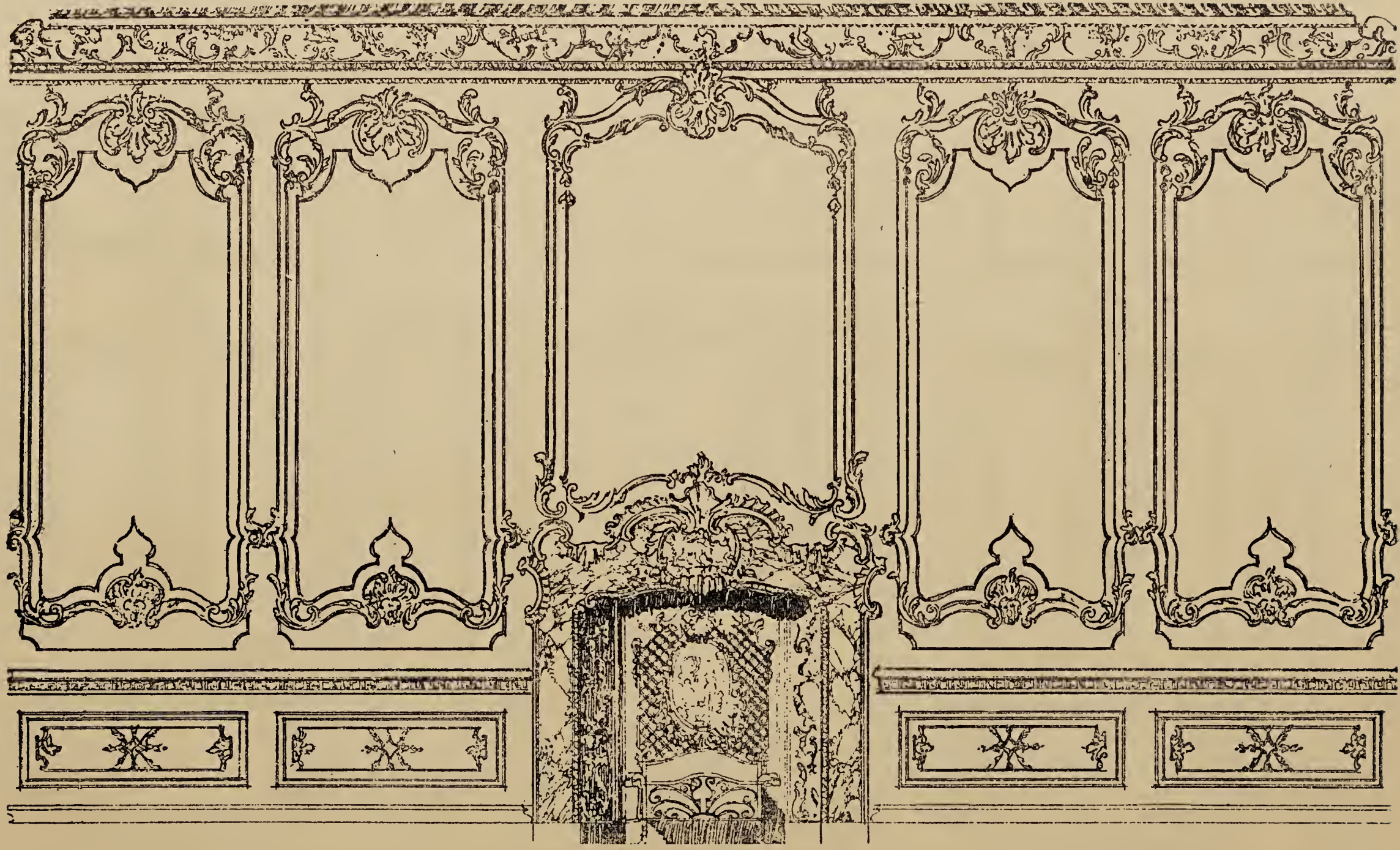
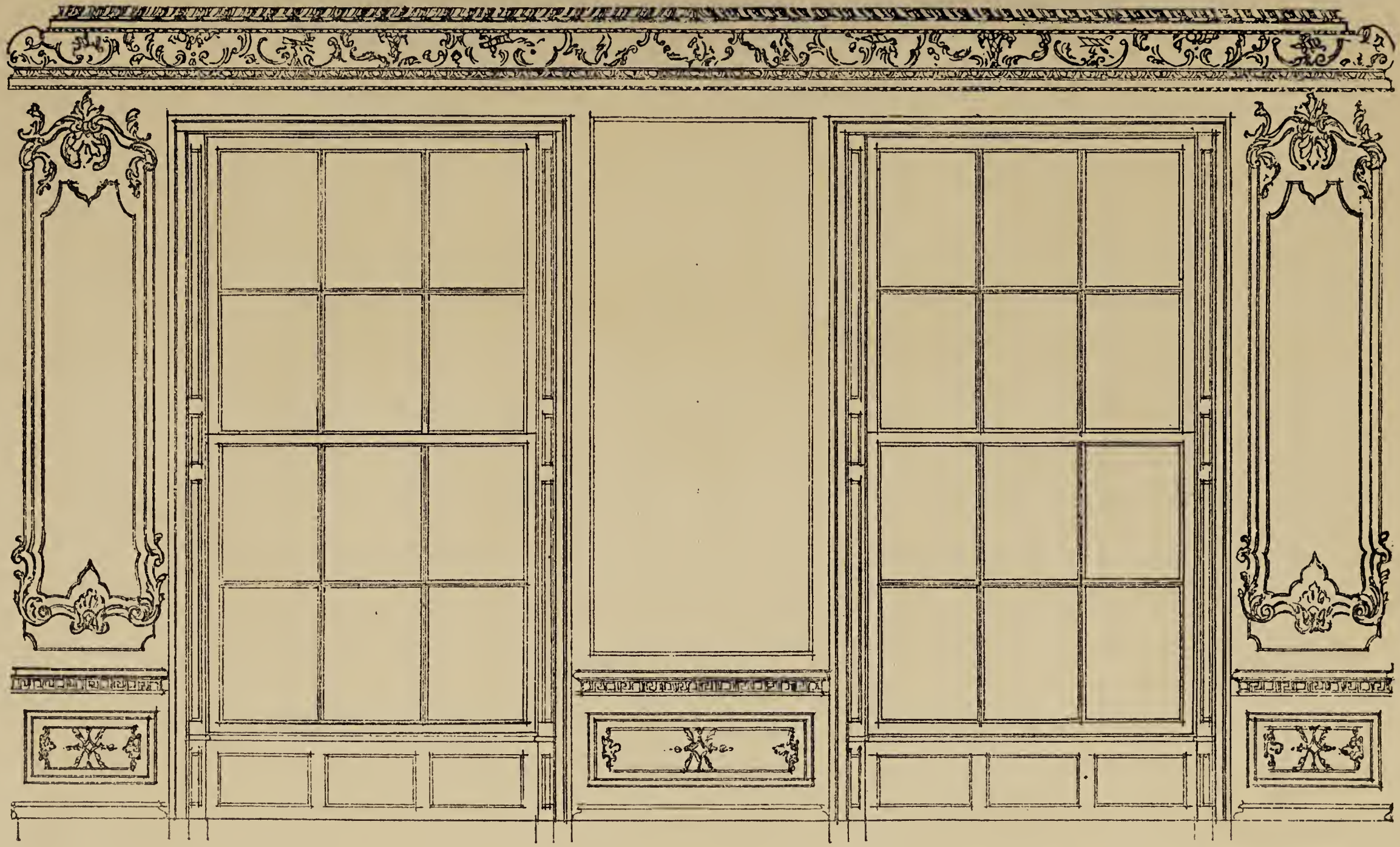


East Wall



West Wall

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Old Clocks and Watches and their Makers: *F. J. Britten*

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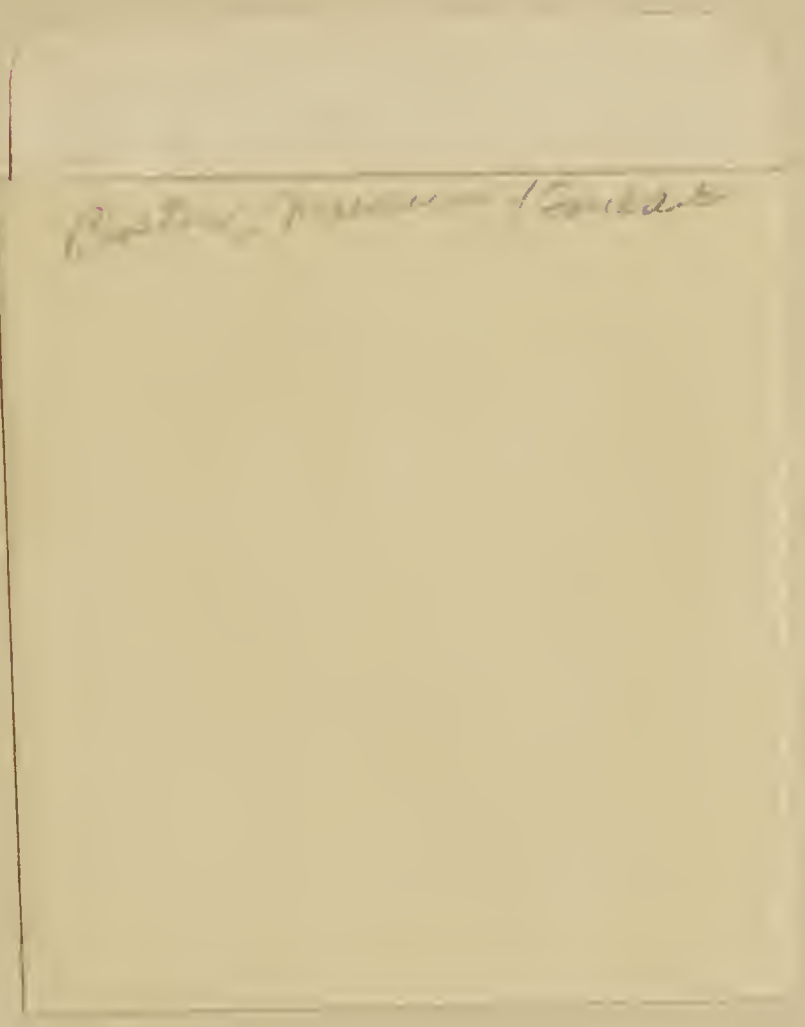

APR 2 [illegible]

Map of Surrey showing location of Wimbledon & St Lawrence A.P.G. 121

From *Perambulation of the County of Surrey*, John Aubrey (1673) vol I